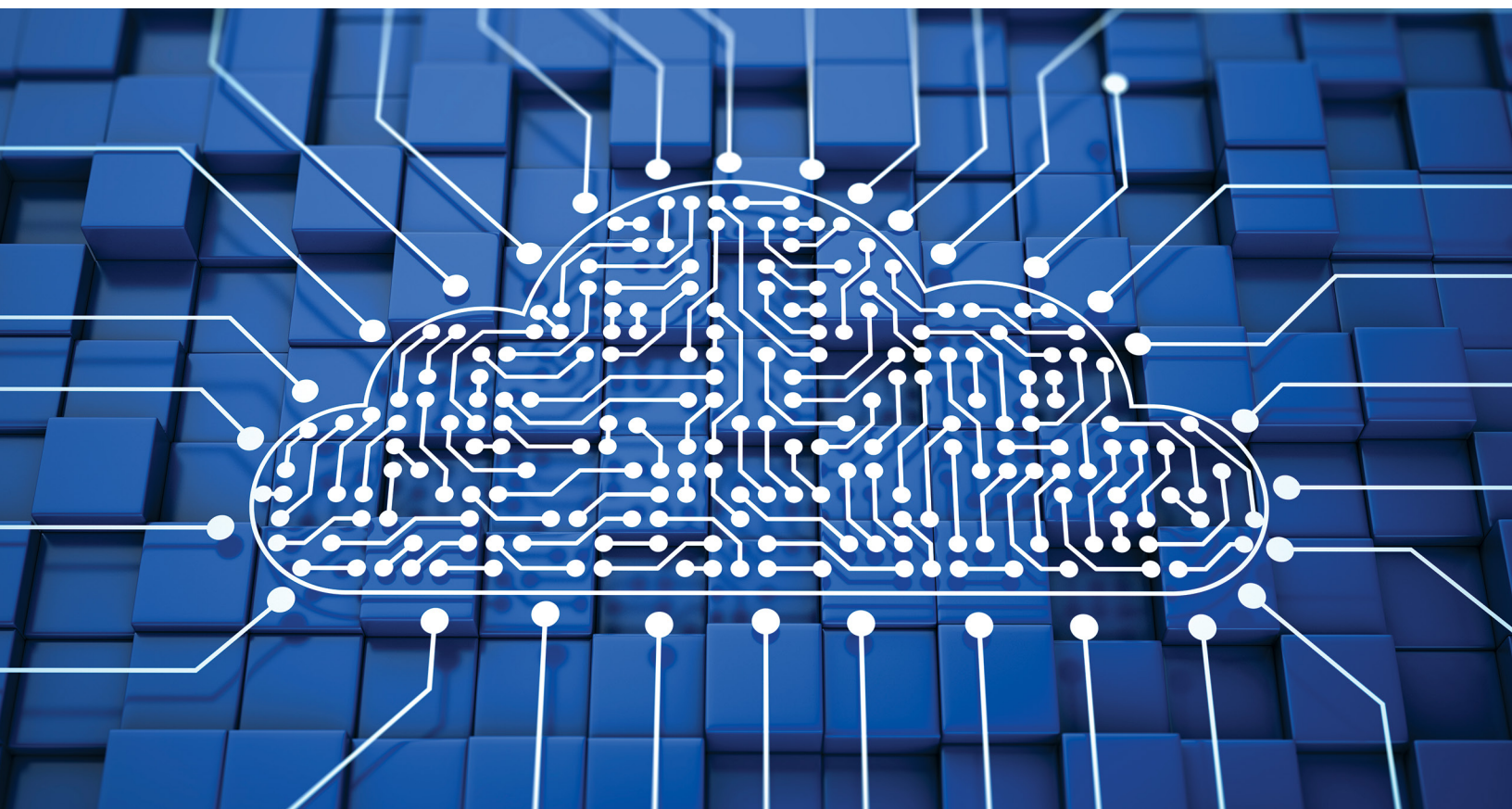# MODERNIZING YOUR CONTENT INFRASTRUCTURE TO DIGITIZE YOUR BUSINESS

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**MODERNIZING YOUR CONTENT INFRASTRUCTURE
TO DIGITIZE YOUR BUSINESS**

The modern, cloud-first approach to manage enterprise content goes well beyond the document-centric technologies that still plague many organizations.

Today, people want to create engagement, consume information, and add value to content-centric processes independent of the content's format or physical location — especially as the volume of content across today's enterprises continues to explode.

Moving enterprise content management technology to the cloud is an important enabler of this vision of 'modern content'. Cloud-first strategies enable organizations to take advantage of the agility, scalability, and resilience of the cloud.

However, today's enterprise IT context goes beyond the cloud to *hybrid IT*: combining cloud and on-premises services to better meet customer needs now and into the future.

With modern content services platforms that provide content-focused services, repositories, APIs, solutions, and business processing tools to support digital business and transformation like ASG Mobius®, enterprises can implement hybrid IT-centric strategies that empower people both within and outside the organization.

DIGITIZATION: THE FIRST STEP TO DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

What is the one common thread that links every office environment - regardless of industry or role or size?

Content.

Content comes in numerous forms and purposes. From employee handbooks to credit card applications, from manuals to product safety sheets, content represents more than the documents themselves — content drives *engagement*.

Content-driven engagement consists of the sum of all the activities surrounding hard copy as well as digital documents. From the creation of the information, to the processes surrounding the movement of documents, content usually passes from one person to another to drive action or record an event. It's important to capture, understand, and process the final disposition of each document automatically, be it someone reading it, filing it, or disposing of it.

While paper documents are still a reality in today's office environments, modern organizations have in large part, digitized their information. Digitizing content can separate the essence of both the information and the activities and processes surrounding it from its physical form.

As a result, we now think of content as *unstructured data*. Unstructured data includes documents on our personal computers and other devices that appears in a wide variety of formats (from legacy mainframe documents to emails to pdfs to CAD files) — as well as audio and video content.

Content is so ubiquitous in today's business environment that it tends to fade into the background noise. Content-driven engagement has become the norm. In fact, everything an organization does —all business processes — is content-related in some form or another.

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BECOMING A CONTENT-DRIVEN BUSINESS IN THE DIGITAL ERA

There's no question that digitizing content is a necessary first step in treating content as a modern information asset.

Combining the variety and quantity of undigitized content with the 'born digital' content that organizations deal with every day, however, makes it clear that digitizing content is only the first step to transforming the business.

Properly and accurately capturing and classifying content and creating needed metadata is necessary for streamlining business processes, making better decisions, as well as identifying and addressing bottlenecks and blind spots.

The goal is to make content usable and accessible. Content-centric technology must enable all manner of content-related tasks, including categorization, classification, and text analytics. Such technology depends upon inexpensive storage, simple deployments, and broad, global access in order to be cost-effective.

Massive scale and agility at modest cost is the price of admission for such enterprise technologies today. To achieve these goals, organizations require an approach to content that leverages the various information stores, applications, and repositories that are already in place, and can support the needs of the business to find and use content, regardless of its location.

Just as paperwork is more about the work than the paper, extracting value from content centers more on the processes a company implements that leverage and transform content as it flows through the organization than the information itself.

Modern content platforms, therefore, must enable the people who control content-centric processes – regardless of whether they be subject matter experts, analysts, or someone who needs to leverage the content within the organization.
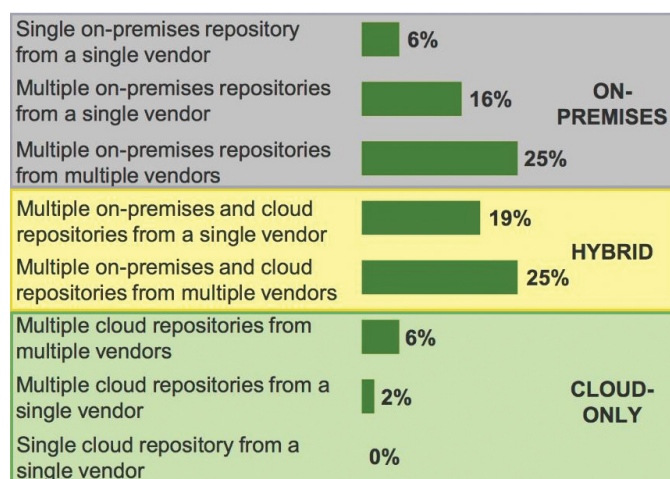
Finally, all of these content-centric capabilities, powerful though they may be, must conform to the guardrails of privacy and regulatory compliance. Not all content has the same level of sensitivity, and any content platform must take the reality of today's privacy-conscious business world into consideration.

WHY HYBRID IT MAKES SENSE FOR CONTENT

For modern content platforms to provide organizations with the control, power, and flexibility they require, it's essential for the content to rise above the complexities of the underlying technology infrastructure.

As enterprises move to the cloud, this ability to separate content issues from infrastructure challenges becomes especially relevant. It's no wonder, therefore, that organizations' content strategies are in various states of maturity as they transition to fully hybrid IT architectures, as the chart below illustrates.

WHAT APPROACH IS YOUR ORGANIZATION TAKING TO STORE CONTENT?

Single on-premises repository from a single vendor	6%	ON-PREMISES
Multiple on-premises repositories from a single vendor	16%	
Multiple on-premises repositories from multiple vendors	25%	
Multiple on-premises and cloud repositories from a single vendor	19%	HYBRID
Multiple on-premises and cloud repositories from multiple vendors	25%	
Multiple cloud repositories from multiple vendors	6%	CLOUD-ONLY
Multiple cloud repositories from a single vendor	2%	
Single cloud repository from a single vendor	0%	

Base: 220 IT and enterprise architecture and operations decision makers involved with content management ("don't know" responses not show).

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of ASG Technologies, February 2017.

Click here to download the report.

It's clear from the chart above that the vast majority of enterprises surveyed have multiple content repositories – and in most cases, those repositories are both on-premises, in the cloud and often across multiple clouds.

Today's enterprises are well on their way to these hybrid and multi-cloud approaches, although many of them still maintain the bulk of their content on-premises.
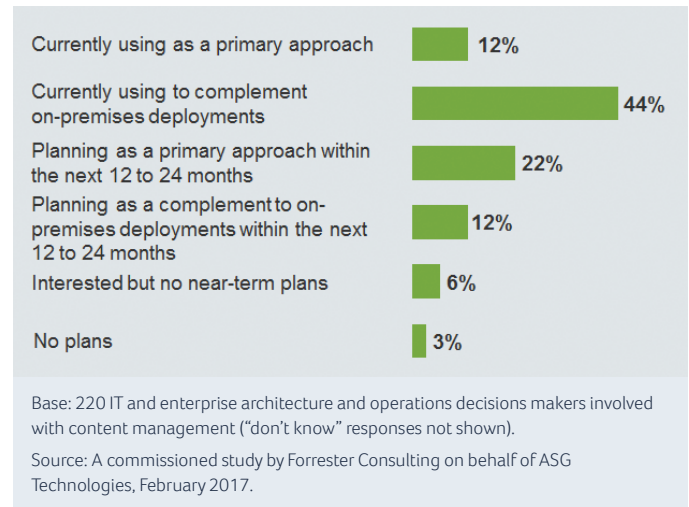
However, even though a relatively small percentage of these companies have moved to cloud-only content repositories, it's still an open question as to whether cloud-only is the preferred long-term strategy.

As the chart below illustrates, about half of the organizations surveyed are using the cloud to complement on-premises deployments, and furthermore, they aren't necessarily planning to move to a cloud-only strategy, as hybrid IT strategies are better able to meet their needs long-term.

WHAT ARE YOUR ORGANIZATION'S PLANS TO MOVE ITS CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS TO A CLOUD ENVIRONMENT?

Currently using as a primary approach	12%
Currently using to complement on-premises deployments	44%
Planning as a primary approach within the next 12 to 24 months	22%
Planning as a complement to on-premises deployments within the next 12 to 24 months	12%
Interested but no near-term plans	6%
No plans	3%

Base: 220 IT and enterprise architecture and operations decisions makers involved with content management ("don't know" responses not shown).

Source: A commissioned study by Forrester Consulting on behalf of ASG Technologies, February 2017.

Click here to download the report.

The most important takeaway from these charts is that taking a hybrid IT approach to content is a favored strategy, both in the short term as well as long-term. There will always be a role for on-premises assets in most enterprises that complement their cloud-based assets – and this principle applies to content as well as other assets in the organization.

The full picture of a content modernization strategy takes into account all the possibilities and benefits of hybrid IT. Companies are increasingly looking to deploy applications across a combination of on-premises environments, private and public clouds, and multi-cloud platforms. Interoperability among and management across the cloud platforms are high priorities.

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THE VALUE OF CONTENT IN THE MODERN DIGITAL ORGANIZATION

Whenever decision makers realize they need some new capability, they typically consider cloud-based solutions – but allow for the possibility that an on-premises solution might be the better choice in certain circumstances.

The same principle applies to any enterprise's modernization strategy as well. In some instances, it makes sense to migrate some on-premises application or system directly to the cloud, for example, when the organization decides to leverage a SaaS application as part of its application strategy.

For organizations with legacy, on-premises content platforms, transitioning to a modern content strategy may involve rethinking how the organization leverages content, what content belongs where, and what technology choices support shifting content-related processes and activities.

For example, any content modernization initiative is likely to overlap a GDPR compliance effort that impacts how an organization stores and manages information about its customers. GDPR affects how organizations collect personal information, how they share it among data collectors and processors, and how organizations use, process, and secure such information.

As various forms of content (from emails to invoices) may contain such personal information, the content strategy must align with GDPR compliance efforts – while at the same time, comply with whatever cloud migration strategy is in place.

GDPR compliance is not a superficial fix. In reality, it's essential for organizations to put safeguards in place and consider privacy by design. Executive management must have visibility into content security, as well as assurance that the organization deletes any personal information that it doesn't have to save.

In addition to risk mitigation efforts like GDPR compliance, migrating content to the cloud also opens up new business opportunities, as content becomes a business asset itself. The cloud is more than simply an alternative location for running applications. It is also a broad ecosystem of SaaS applications that the content platform may integrate with in order to build content-centric business models.

In some situations, an organization's content becomes a strategic top-line benefit, as the market value of such content prompts the organization to sell access to it for a price. In other situations, the content supports core business functions, where consolidating and rationalizing it adds to the value it can provide.

MOVING CONTENT TO THE CLOUD WITH ASG MOBIUS

ASG Mobius Content Services capture, govern and deliver digital content and assets that people, applications, and machines generate at web-scale volumes. They support hybrid IT architectures that run in any cloud and on-premises environments and take advantage of the scalability, resilience, and ease-of-use of cloud-based applications.

ASG Mobius takes a federated approach to manage enterprise content. It federates content by leaving it in place and connecting to content repositories and databases to provide high-performance, real-time access to a wide range of content types. Purpose-built integrations with popular business systems and cloud-first applications provide content federation for both on premises and in the cloud, where moving to the cloud does not require new ingestion or duplication of content. ASG Mobius Federation Services support enterprise security and compliance priorities, across geographies, regions and lines of business.

Companies can either consolidate their existing content repositories into ASG Mobius as necessary, discarding redundant content systems in the process, or move all their content to a central ASG Mobius repository if such a move meets their needs.

One of ASG's customers, Liberty Mutual, uses ASG Mobius as its content management system for directing documents, print streams, and PDFs across every business team in its organization that created or consumed content.

The company chose to deploy Mobius in Amazon.com's AWS public cloud. As a result, ASG Mobius became the primary archive content repository for the company's documents on AWS.

In addition, the ASG Mobius platform manages Liberty Mutual's regulatory archives for both long-term preservation and day-to-day access. The platform also provides federated search capabilities that support access to all of Liberty Mutual's content by thousands of the company's associates.

Furthermore, ASG Mobius enabled Liberty Mutual to implement organization-wide content management regardless of the format of the incoming media, including Microsoft Word documents, PDFs, JPGs, and video and audio files.

Click here to download Liberty Mutual case study

MODERNIZING YOUR CONTENT INFRASTRUCTURE TO DIGITIZE YOUR BUSINESS

THE INTELLYX TAKE

As the Liberty Mutual example illustrates, even traditional enterprises can support their cloud-first strategies by moving content management to the cloud.

Since the ASG Mobius repository supports federation, there's no requirement that all content must be in the cloud, or even move at all. Instead, organizations are welcomed – and even encouraged – to take a hybrid IT approach to their content as part of a strategic IT modernization strategy.

Furthermore, platforms like ASG Mobius lower the risk inherent in launching new content-centric initiatives, in the cloud or on premises. Organizations are thus able to increase the velocity of change in their organizations by leveraging the flexibility of cloud computing, while still maintaining on-premises assets as needed.

The hybrid IT-centric content story is fast becoming the best practice approach to content in the digital era, as people both inside and outside the organization are able to securely leverage whatever content they require, wherever that content resides, whenever they need it.

More than any other characteristic, the '*any-time, any-place, any-content*' aspect of modern content management is at the core of how digitally transformed organizations leverage their content - both for existing business processes as well as new business models in the digital era.

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